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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of the Russian Federation

Addendum

Information provided by the Russian Federation in follow-up to the concluding observations*

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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Paragraph 14 (a) and (b)

The national strategy for women for the period 2017–2022 was approved pursuant to Government Order No. 410-r of 8 March 2017.

The strategy establishes the main areas of focus of the State policy for women and is intended to give effect to the principle of equal rights and freedoms and to create equal opportunities for women's enjoyment of such rights and freedoms, in accordance with the Constitution, the generally recognized principles and standards of international law and the international treaties to which the Russian Federation is a party.

The strategy focuses on the following: creating an environment conducive to the protection of the health of women of all ages; improving the economic status and prosperity of women; redressing the social hardships faced by women and preventing violence against women; increasing participation by women in public and political life; and improving the quality of national statistics relating to the situation of women in society.

The strategy will be implemented in two phases.

During the first phase, in 2017–2018, an action plan will be adopted to implement the strategy (the plan is currently being agreed with the federal executive authorities). Mechanisms have been developed to implement the strategy and to provide informational, analytical, legal and staffing support for the State policy for women. Methodological recommendations have been prepared for the constituent entities of the Russian Federation on the development of regional administrative mechanisms for improving the situation of women, taking the specific characteristics of each region into account.

During the second phase, in 2019–2022, measures will be taken to improve the situation of women in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres, in line with the strategy's expected outcomes.

The strategy will be put into practice by the federal executive authorities and the executive authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, using their respective budget allocations, with the involvement of interested public associations and organizations; additional funds from extrabudgetary sources may be used.

The strategy will be implemented using the resources set aside for activities planned under State programmes in the following areas: public health, education, economic and industrial development, employment promotion, social welfare, social protection for persons with disabilities, physical culture and sports, information technology, culture and tourism, and public safety. Resources will also be made available through State programmes and priority national projects relating to education, public health and social welfare.

By the year 2022, the implementation of the strategy should yield a system of measures that give effect to the principle of equal rights and freedoms for men and women and create equal opportunities for women's enjoyment of such rights and freedoms in all aspects of life; foster women's economic independence and political engagement and create more opportunities for their self-fulfilment; and challenge stereotypes regarding the social roles of men and women.

Pursuant to Government Decision No. 1520 of 28 December 2016, a coordinating council was established within the Government to oversee the strategy's implementation.

The main tasks of the coordinating council are:

- To discuss challenges and practical matters related to implementing the strategy
- To determine ways and means of implementing the strategy
- To draft proposals that identify priorities and activities under the State policy for women
- To foster cooperation between the federal executive authorities, the executive authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, and public, scientific and other organizations concerned with developing policies that improve the situation of women
- To work with the institutions that coordinate the implementation of the strategy in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

The composition of the coordinating council, which is headed by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, was approved pursuant to Government Order No. 2929-r of 31 December 2016. It includes members of the Federation Council and the State Duma (the upper and lower houses of the Federal Assembly), senior officials of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and representatives of the federal executive authorities and of civil society organizations.

Paragraph 22 (a)

Pursuant to Federal Act No. 323-FZ of 3 July 2016, which amended the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure to provide more detail on the grounds and the procedure for exemption from criminal liability, the acts referred to in article 116 (1) of the Criminal Code were decriminalized and are now governed by the Code on Administrative Offences.

A note was also added to article 116 of the Criminal Code in which "family or household members" were defined as spouses, parents, children, adoptive parents, adopted children, siblings, grandfathers, grandmothers, grandchildren, guardians, trustees, and persons in a relationship with or sharing a household with the accused.

These amendments gave rise to an anomalous situation. For battery against family or household members, criminal liability was incurred with the first offence, whereas battery against other persons was considered an administrative offence.

At the same time, a further legal anomaly was identified: battery against family or household members not resulting in injury was punishable by a maximum prison sentence of up to two years, but if it resulted in minor injury, the maximum prison sentence was four months.

Furthermore, in accordance with article 20 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, crimes against family or household members were recategorized to make them subject to semi-public prosecution rather than private prosecution, which meant that criminal cases brought against a family or household member under article 116 of the Criminal Code could not be discontinued even when the parties had reconciled.

The aforementioned legal provisions — the so-called anti-spanking law — prompted a surge of protests by parents across the country. After proposals were received from a large number of citizens to remove these inconsistencies, it was decided that article 116 of the Criminal Code should be reworked.

As a result, on 7 February 2017, Federal Act No. 8-FZ was adopted, reclassifying battery and other violent acts against family or household members as administrative offences when committed for the first time. Liability for such offences

is incurred in accordance with article 6.1.1 (Battery) of the Code on Administrative Offences.

Criminal liability for battery against family or household members is now incurred only for repeat offences. In such cases, article 116.1 of the Criminal Code (Battery committed by a person who has incurred an administrative penalty) applies. Invoking criminal liability for a repeat administrative offence serves, inter alia, to detect and address in a timely manner instances of domestic violence or unlawful conduct by parents or other persons prone to committing violent acts. The objective is also to prevent the commission of more grievous crimes, such as domestic homicides that follow protracted domestic conflict.

The national strategy for women includes a component aimed at redressing the social hardships faced by women and preventing violence against women. To that end, there are plans to update the laws aimed at preventing domestic violence and to update and liberalize laws concerning women who are in detention for the commission of less grievous crimes, including women who have children. There are also plans to develop the system for socialization and reintegration of women released from detention.

In that connection, the following measures are envisaged:

1. Effective blueprints for preventing violence against women and children will be developed.

2. More informational and educational activities concerning the prevention of violence against women, including for law enforcement officers, judges, health workers, psychologists and social workers who assist women in need, will be organized.

3. Facilities that provide services to women and children who are or have been victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse or other forms of violence, including women's crisis centres that serve as safe havens pending the resolution of the conflict, domestic or otherwise, that is the cause of the violence, will be provided with more resources.

4. Non-profit organizations that provide shelter and psychological and social support to victims of violence will receive assistance.

5. Behavioural and educational programmes on non-violent methods of conflict resolution for children, teenagers and young people will be developed and introduced.

6. The collection of statistics relating to crimes committed against women will be improved.

7. Women released from detention will receive social, legal and psychological support and assistance with adaptation, socialization and reintegration.

As part of implementing the national strategy, work will continue to update the laws aimed at preventing domestic violence.

Victims of violence are entitled to social services in accordance with Federal Act No. 442-FZ of 28 December 2013 on the Principles of Social Services in the Russian Federation. The organization of social services in each constituent entity of the Russian Federation falls within the remit of that entity's executive authorities.

The executive authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation are independently responsible for establishing organizations that provide social services and determining the inventory of available social services and the procedures

for their delivery, taking into account the needs of the public and the social, economic, demographic and geographic characteristics of the region.

These social service organizations include establishments that provide child and family welfare services; social rehabilitation centres, including those serving minors; centres for assisting children deprived of parental care; women's crisis centres; psychological and educational support centres; social service centres; shelters; temporary accommodation; and other organizations that provide semi-residential social services.

These organizations offer various types of social services:

1. Welfare services (support in everyday activities)

2. Medical services (health care and protection; case management; regular health screening)

3. Mental health services (psychological rehabilitation that promotes social adaptation; anonymous counselling through support hotlines)

4. Educational services (prevention of behavioural and developmental disorders; fostering of healthy habits; organization of leisure activities; parenting support)

5. Employment services (job placement services and assistance with other challenges associated with workplace integration)

6. Legal aid services (assistance with obtaining legal services relating to the protection of rights and legitimate interests)

7. Services for persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities

8. Emergency social services (free hot meals or food packages, clothing and other basic necessities; assistance with obtaining temporary housing, legal aid or emergency counselling; and other emergency social services).

Social services are provided in situations of domestic conflict, including when it involves persons who are dependent on drugs or alcohol or who have gambling problems or mental disorders, and also in situations of violence in the home. Services are provided on an inpatient or outpatient basis and in the form of home visits. A national hotline for victims of violence is available.

Data, disaggregated by gender, age and facility type, is collected using a State statistical monitoring form for collecting information on the number of persons who have sought assistance from social welfare institutions for families and children, including the number of social services clients who have sought assistance in connection with violent acts.